

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION EUR-12

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E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MILI, PINT, PEPR, NO, OVIP (BROWN, HAROLD)
SUBJECT: SECDEF'S VISIT: BACKGROUND PAPER: NORWEGIAN ALLIANCE
RELATIONS

1. WHEN NORWAY JOINED THE NORTH ATLANTIC ALLIANCE IN 1960 SHE DID SO ONLY AFTER A PROTRACTED AND RATHER POLITICALLY DIVISIVE INTERNAL DEBATE WHICH PITTED THOSE WHO HELD TO THE NATION'S NATURAL AND HISTORIC TENDENCIES TOWARDS NEUTRALISM AGAINST THOSE WHO FELT THAT THE RECENT LESSONS OF WW II SHOWED THEM WHERE THEIR TRUE SECURITY LAY. THE COUNTRY'S MEMBERSHIP IN NATO HAS COME TO BE QUALIFIED BY TWO POST-WAR FOREIGN POLICY PRINCIPLES THESE ARE THAT NO FOREIGN TROOPS OR NUCLEAR WEAPONS SHALL BE STATIONED ON NORWEGIAN SOIL DURING PEACETIME. AN ADDITIONAL ELEMENT WHICH, THOUGH NOT DIRECTLY RELATED TO NORWAY'S MEMBERSHIP IN THE ALLIANCE, DOES IN FACT AFFECT ITS MILITARY RELATIONSHIP THE STRICT PROHIBITION AGAINST EXPORTING MILITARY EQUIPMENT TO COUNTRIES AT WAR OR THREATENED BY WAR. AN EXAMPLE OF THE IMPACT OF THIS LATTER POINT AROSE RECENTLY IN THE CONTEXT OF THIRD COUNTRY SALES BY THE F-16 CONSORTIUM AROSE.

2. DURING THE ENSUING YEARS NORWAY'S COMMITMENT TO NATO AND ITS BELIEF IN THE WISDOM OF OPTING FOR COLLECTIVE WESTERN
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DEFENSE HAS BEEN REINFORCED. RECENT POLLS SHOW THAT WELL OVER 50 PERCENT OF THE NORWEGIAN POPULATION SUPPORTS NORWAY'S NATO MEMBERSHIP. THIS DOES NOT MEAN, HOWEVER, THAT THERE HAVE NOT BEEN PROBLEMS ARISING OUT OF THE ABOVE STATED LIMITATIONS OR OUT OF NORWAY'S SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP WITHIN THE NORDIC COMMUNITY OR ITS PERCEPTIONS OF ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH THE NEIGHBORING SOVIET UNION. SEVERAL RECENT EXAMPLES COME TO MIND.

3. BECAUSE OF ITS EXPERIENCES DURING WW II, NORWAY HAS ALWAYS BEEN SOMEWHAT SENSITIVE TO THE QUESTION OF GERMAN MILITARY PRESENCE ON ITS TERRITORY. HOWEVER, DURING THE LAST 10 YEARS THE GON HAS ATTEMPTED TO "NORMALIZE" ITS SECURITY RELATIONSHIP WITH THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC. THIS HAS MEANT THE ASSIGNMENT OF SENIOR GERMAN OFFICERS AT AFNORTH AND THE PARTICIPATION OF GERMAN TROOPS IN NATO MANEUVERS HELD IN NORWAY. THE NUMBER AND TYPE (SUPPORT OR COMBAT) OF THE GERMANS TAKING PART HAVE BEEN RATHER CAREFULLY STAGED AND REVIEWED EVERY YEAR BEFORE UPCOMING MANEUVERS. THIS YEAR A DECISION WAS MADE TO MAINTAIN THE SAME LEVEL OF GERMAN PARTICIPATION THAT IS ABOUT 480 MEN AND NOT RAISE IT FOR THE 1980 "FIRE BRIGADE" EXERCISE. THIS DECISION RAN COUNTER TO PUBLIC ANTICIPATION THAT THE NUMBER OF GERMAN TROOPS PARTICIPATING WOULD BE DRAMATICALLY LARGER (AROUND 1500) AND WOULD INCLUDE A SIZEABLE COMBAT UNIT. THE GON RATHER MALADROITLY HANDLED THE ISSUE, FAILED TO CONSULT WITH ITS ALLIES, FIRST LEAVING THE IMPRESSION THAT THE DECISION HAS BEEN MADE IN RESPONSE TO WELL PUBLICIZED SOVIET OBJECTIONS TO THE GERMAN PRESENCE. IN FACT THE EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT FINNISH INTERVENTION WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE LIMITATIONS. WHATEVER THE CAUSE, THE EPISODE DID NOTHING TO ENHANCE NORWAY'S IMAGE OF AN INDEPENDENT AND STRONG-MINDED ALLY.

4. NORWEGIAN OBJECTIONS TO THE PRODUCTION AND DEPLOYMENT OF
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THE ER/RB COME FROM THE TRADITIONAL DEEP PUBLIC COMMITMENT TO ARMS CONTROL AND AVERSION TO NUCLEAR WEAPONS WHICH HAS BEEN REFLECTED OVER THE YEARS IN A NUMBER OF NORWEGIAN EFFORTS. WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE NORWEGIANS ARE PREPARED TO GO ON RECORD AT THE ATLANTIC COUNCIL OPPOSING THE PRODUCTION OR DEPLOYMENT OF THE ER/RB WEAPON. ON OTHER MAJOR ALLIANCE PROJECTS, HOWEVER, THAT DO NOT TOUCH BASIC NORWEGIAN PRINCIPLES, NORWAY HAS BEEN FORTHCOMING. AN EXAMPLE IS NORWAY'S CONSISTENT AND LONG TERM SUPPORT OF AWACS. IT HAS ACCEPTED, WITHOUT QUIBBLE, ITS SHARE IN PURCHASE AND OPERATION EXPENSES AND HAS ACCEPTED IN PRINCIPLE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN AWACS FORWARD OPERATING LOCATION IN NORWAY. (DEMONSTRATING THE ELASTICITY OF ITS BASE POLICY WHEN REAL ALLIANCE INTERESTS ARE APPARENT.)

5. NORWAY HAS ALSO WORKED CLOSELY WITH SEVERAL ALLIES ON TROOP TRAINING EXERCISES, SHIP VISITS AND VARIOUS DEFENSE PROCUREMENT PROJECTS. BRITISH MARINES TRAIN ON A REGULAR AND ANNUAL BASIS IN NORWAY. THE GON RECENTLY AGREED TO PRESTOCK BRITISH OVERSNOW VEHICLES IN NORWAY. THEY ALSO COOPERATE WITH DUTCH ON THEIR MARITIME SURVEILLANCE AND HAVE DISCUSSED INCREASED WINTER TRAINING FOR DUTCH MARINES, INCREASING TRAINING OF AMERICAN TROOPS, COOPERATION WITH THE

FEDERAL REPUBLIC ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW SUBMARINE AND
A NUMBER OF JOINT WEAPONS PROJECTS PARTICULARLY WITH THE US
BUT ALSO WITH GREAT BRITAIN.

6. IN SUM, THEN, NORWAY'S RELATIONSHIP WITH THE ALLIANCE,
BOTH COLLECTIVELY AND INDIVIDUALLY, HAS MATURED SINCE 1950.
ITS DEVELOPING SENSE OF WESTERN ORIENTATION AND CONFIDENCE HAS
LED IT TO TAKE A MORE ACTIVE ROLE IN NATO MEETINGS AND IN SUCH
BODIES AS THE INDEPENDENT EUROPEAN PROGRAM GROUP. ITS GROWING
WEALTH ALSO ENABLES IT TO TAKE A MUCH MORE PARTICIPATORY ROLE WITH
ITS ALLIES IN NUMEROUS DEFENSE RELATED AREAS.
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